

**Helicopter Guidelines**

<b>#</b>	<b>Title of Information / Guideline</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	HELICOPTER PREFLIGHT BRIEFING	2
2	GUIDELINES FOR INGRESS TO HELICOPTER	3
3	GUIDELINES FOR EGRESS FROM HELICOPTER	4
4	GUIDELINES FOR EMERGENCY EGRESS TO HELICOPTER	5
5	GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING A LANDING ZONE	6
6	HELICOPTER GROUND TO AIR COMMUNICATIONS	7

**References:**

“Helicopter Familiarization”, Major Dave Arterburn, DART Team Training, 16 Mar 01.

“Special Rescue Services Group’s Helicopter Rescue and Operations Class”, Special Rescue Services Group and World Rescue Services Inc, Sonora, CA, 2000

**Information Sheet #1**

TOPIC:       HELICOPTER PREFLIGHT BRIEFING

INTRODUCTION:   General information needed before boarding helicopter.

---

**Introduction of Pilot(s) and Crew Chief** – Identification of Key Personnel

**Characteristics of Aircraft** – Weights, Loading Limitations, Special Concerns ...

**Transport Needs** – Weights, Loading Limitations, Special Concerns ...

Compare Aircraft Characteristics to Transport Needs – Do Not Overload

**Flight Plan** – Destination, Route, Assignment, Weather, Expected Time of Travel

**Standard Operation of Aircraft Features** – Briefing from Flight Crew

Operation of Seat Belts

Normal Operation of Door Latches

How To Approach, Board and Exit Aircraft

Gear Storage – Any Loading or Unloading Guidelines

Location and Operations of Radio and Headset Operations

**Emergency Operations** – Briefing from Flight Crew

Emergency Equipment Location – First Aid Kit, ELT, Fire Extinguisher

Emergency Guidelines – Land and Water (If Applicable)

Egress and Door Operation

Emergency Fuel and Battery Shutoff

Crash Positions

Rally Point in Event of Crash – e.g. Upwind 100 Yards of Crash Site

**Information Sheet #2**

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR INGRESS TO HELICOPTER

INTRODUCTION: Method to board helicopters

---

Crewchief or Pilot May Indicate a Deviation From Following Guidelines

**Personal Protective Equipment – Don Safety Equipment Before Boarding**

- Eye Protection – Goggles or Safety Glasses
- Ear Protection – Earplugs and / or Headphones
- Fire Resistant Clothing As Necessary – No Turnouts On Over Water Flights
- Helmet and Gloves
- Life Jacket for Over Water Operations

**Prepare For Boarding Outside of Landing Zone**

- Stage Upwind and Downhill of Landing Zone If Able
- Form Visible Group In One Location – Pilot Can Easily Recognize
- Preassign Seating Locations and Entry Order If Able To
- Check for No Loose Items On Personnel or With Carried Equipment
- Gain Pilot Attention Before Approaching Aircraft
  - Never Approach From Tail Rotor Area
  - Stay Low to Ground
  - Do Not Carry Items Over Shoulder Height
  - Do Not Approach From Upslope of Aircraft

**Boarding – As Directed By Crew Chief (Approach 45-90 Degrees From Nose)**

- Secure Equipment in Aircraft (Do Not Put Under Seat)
  - Use Floor Tiedowns As Needed
  - May Hold Personal Gear in Lap
- Secure Seat Belt or Safety Line
- Sit Quietly and Pay Attention to Crew Chief

### Information Sheet #3

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR NORMAL EGRESS TO HELICOPTER

INTRODUCTION: Method for conducting non-emergency exit of helicopters

---

Crewchief or Pilot May Indicate a Deviation From Following Guidelines

**Prepare for Existing Aircraft** – Sit Quietly and Pay Attention to Crew Chief

- Mentally Anticipate Side of Aircraft to Exit, Gear to Remove, ...
- Disconnect From Intercom System If Attached
- Keep Seatbelt Fastened Until Aircraft Motion Stops

**Exist Aircraft** – Do Not Leave Unsecured Items In Helicopter

- Undo Seat Belt or From Safety Line (Rebuckle After Out of Seat)
- Gather Gear Assigned to Carry – Secure Equipment
- Step Down From Helicopter (Do Not Jump)

**Leave Landing Zone Under Rotor Area**

- Bend Slightly at Waist (Especially If You Are Tall)
- Never Exit Toward Tail Rotor Area
- Do Not Carry Items Over Shoulder Height
- Do Not Leave Going Upslope of Aircraft
- Quickly Move Outside the Rotor Disk

**Regroup Team in Safe Area**

**Information Sheet #4**

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR EMERGENCY EGRESS TO HELICOPTER

INTRODUCTION: Methods for conducting emergency exit of helicopters

---

Crewchief or Pilot May Indicate a Deviation From Following Guidelines  
Use Normal Egress Guidelines As Applicable

**Prepare for Existing Aircraft** – Sit Quietly and Pay Attention to Crew Chief

- Mentally Anticipate Side of Aircraft to Exit, Gear to Remove, ...

- May Hold Side of Aircraft With “Guide Hand” for Exit Direction

- Mentally Prepare for How Seat Belt Unbuckles

- Prepare to Grab First Aid Kit, Fire Extinguisher and Crash Axe If Nearby

- Crack Door Open if Seated By Door (Depends on Type of Helicopter)

- Disconnect From Intercom System if Attached

- Assume Crash Position

- Back To Nose of Aircraft – Sit Back

- Facing Nose of Aircraft – Lean Forward if Able

**Egress Aircraft** – Wait for Crew Command to Exit if Able

- After Aircraft Motion Stops - Unbuckle Seat Belt or Safety Line

- Water Landing – Helicopter Will Roll Upside Down (~5 sec)

- Take and Hold Breath Just Before Impact

- Follow “Guide Hand” to Exit Direction of Helicopter

- Check That Rotor Is Stopped Before Exiting

- Open Door or Emergency Exit

- Remove Self Before Helping Others

**Secure Aircraft** – If Able To and Safe to Perform (If Needed)

- Fuel Shutoff

- Battery Shutoff

- Activate Emergency Locator Transmitter

**Meet at Rally Point** – Should Be Prearranged

- Typically Upwind and Safe Distance From Accident Site

**Information Sheet #5**

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING A LANDING ZONE

INTRODUCTION: Method for organizing a landing zone for helicopters.

---

**Determine Clear Open Area for Landing – Move to Better Spot if Needed**

- Minimum 60 ft x 60 ft for Most Helicopters Operations
- Surface Clear of Loose Dust or Snow (May Cause Brownout)
- Relatively Flat – Area Slope < 8 Degrees (Depends on Helicopter)
- Clear of Wires and Loose Debris (Especially Wires on Approach End)
- Mark and / or Communicate Hazards In Area to Aircrew
- Sweep Area of Sticks, Rocks and Loose Items (Tents, Tarps, ...)
- Helicopter Normally Lands and Takes Off Into the Wind

**Mark / Communicate Area – Record / Transmit Features of Landing Site**

- Location (Longitude and Latitude Expressed in Decimal Values)
- Dimensions (Feet) and Orientation (Degrees From True North)
- Wind Speed (Knots) and Direction (Degrees From True North)
- Distinguishing Characteristics – Natural or Manmade

**Hazards – Power Lines, Wires, Stumps, Uneven or Soft Ground**

- Mark Both Near and Far Sides of Obstacles and Hazards
- Night: Mark Obstacles With Red Lights (Chemlights Preferred)
- Markings – Designate Landing Spot, Hazards, Wind Direction,...
- Use Reflective or Bright Colored Panels if Able
  - Must Be Securely Staked Down
  - Orange Preferred - Avoid Using Red Panels to Mark LZ
- Use Smoke If Able – Source Located Downwind of Landing Zone
- Night: Be Careful of Light Use for Blinding Pilot
  - Restrict Light if Helicopter Flying With Night Vision Goggles
  - Preferred –Obtain Pilot Instructions on How LZ Is Illuminated

**Establish Radio Contact With Aircraft if Able**

- Report Recorded Features of Landing Site

**Staffing Landing Spot – Minimum of Two People**

- One Person Serves as Ground Guide for Aircraft
  - As Aircraft Approaches the Landing Zone – Hold Arms Above Head
  - Direct Aircraft to Land In Front of And Facing Guide
- Other Person Serves as Lookout / Safety for Ground Environment
  - Control Access to Landing Zone from Ground Traffic / Personnel
  - Safety for Aircraft Operations

## Information Sheet #6

TOPIC: HELICOPTER GROUND TO AIR COMMUNICATIONS

INTRODUCTION: Standard helicopter ground controller hand signals.

